



Jen Haberling
Professional Biography
MTOY 2008-2009

Creativity and collaboration are the keys to great teaching and learning.

Jen Haberling has had experience teaching students at the middle school, high school, and college levels through the lenses of secondary (6-12) English and secondary English education.

She grew up in the Kalamazoo area, graduating from Mattawan High School. She attended Central Michigan University, focusing her studies on psychology. After earning a BS in Psychology from CMU, Jen earned a teaching certificate at Grand Valley State University with an emphasis in secondary English. While at GVSU, Jen learned that her strengths as a teacher, her desire to connect with students, and her knowledge of psychology would best intersect in a high school or middle school English classroom. After graduating from GVSU, Jen established herself as a teacher in Cadillac Public Schools. There, she taught yearbook journalism and a variety of required English classes at the high school level.

Early in her career Jen learned that her son was deaf, so she and her family made a move to the Grand Rapids area in order to take advantage of excellent education opportunities for deaf children. With the move, Jen found a teaching opportunity at Hudsonville High School. In her time there, she taught students in every level of required English, as well as a senior-level elective, college writing.

After having the opportunity to speak to a number of future teachers at the college level, Jen decided to expand her experience by taking a teaching assignment at the middle school level. For the last several years, Jen has taught seventh grade students English language arts. During the 2007-2008 school year, she and a teaching partner began an accelerated program for eighth grade students, tackling the ninth grade curriculum a year early. In addition, she and a science teacher created an elective course that combined creative writing and science investigation in a hands-on course called CSI. She also designed an elective that focuses on literature circles, and completed her master's degree in humanities at Central Michigan University.

In addition to teaching full time at Baldwin Street Middle School, Jen occasionally teaches English education courses like Teaching Literature to Adolescents and Teaching Writing as an adjunct professor at GVSU. Jen has presented at the Michigan Council of Teachers of English and the National Council of Teachers of English annual conventions over the last eight years on creative approaches to teaching research; on honoring faith in public schools; and on authentic character education. She has presented at the National Science Teachers Association area conference on the writing-science CSI class. With her writing partner, she has published several articles, including "Teaching Our Town in Our Town," "Trading Spaces with Tom Walker: Moving the Devil out of Fourth Hour," and "The Case for Studying Character(s) in the Literature Classroom." She is passionate about collaborative, engaging teaching and learning, as well as creative ways to implement writing across the content areas.

Jen lives in Hudsonville, with her 7th grade daughter Alexis, 9th grade son Devin and husband Tim. She currently is serving as the 2008-2009 Michigan Teacher of the Year while teaching full-time at Baldwin Street Middle School. As Teacher of the Year, she serves in a non-voting capacity at the State Board of Education meetings and is an active member of the Network of Michigan Educators. She is excited to inspire collaboration and creativity in teachers and learners.